The Legend of Zelda

The Legend of Zelda[a] is an action-adventure video game franchise created by Japanese game designers Shigeru Miyamoto and Takashi Tezuka. It is primarily developed and published by Nintendo, although some portable installments and re-releases have been outsourced to Capcom, Vanpool, and Grezzo. The series' gameplay incorporates elements of action, adventure, and puzzle-solving games

The series centers on Link, the playable character and chief protagonist. Link is often given the task of rescuing Princess Zelda and the kingdom of Hyrule from Ganon, who is the principal antagonist of the series; however, other settings and antagonists have appeared in several games. The plots commonly involve a relic known as the Triforce, a set of three golden triangles that together are omnipotent. The protagonist in each game is usually not the same incarnation of Link, but a few exceptions exist.

Since the original *The Legend of Zelda* was released in 1986, the series has expanded to include 19 entries on all of Nintendo's major game consoles, as well as a number of spin-offs. An American animated TV series based on the games aired in 1989 and individual manga adaptations commissioned by Nintendo have been produced in Japan since 1997. *The Legend of Zelda* is one of Nintendo's most prominent and successful franchises, selling over 80 million copies as of 2017; many of its games are considered by critics to be among the greatest video games of all time

The Legend of Zelda	
THE LEGEND OF ZELDA	
Genre(s)	Action-adventure
Developer(s)	Nintendo Capcom Vanpool Grezzo
Publisher(s)	Nintendo
Creator(s)	Shigeru Miyamoto Takashi Tezuka
Composer(s)	Koji Kondo
Platform(s)	List
Platform(s) of origin	Family Computer Disk System
First release	*The Legend of Zelda* February 21, 1986
Latest release	*Hyrule Warriors: Definitive Edition* May 18, 2018

Contents

Overview

Gameplay

The Legend of Zelda games feature a mixture of puzzles, action, adventure/battle gameplay, and exploration. These elements have remained constant throughout the series, but with refinements and additions featured in each new game. Later games in the series als include stealth gameplay, where the player must avoid enemies while proceeding through a level, as well as racing elements. Although the games can be beaten with a minimal amount of exploration and side quests, the player is frequently rewarded with helpful items or increased abilities for solving puzzles or exploring hidden areas. Some items are consistent and appear many times throughout the series (such as bombs and bomb flowers, which can be used both as weapons and to open blocked or hidden doorways; boomerangs, which can kill or paralyze enemies; keys for locked doors; magic swords, shields, and bows and arrows), while others are unique to a single game. Though the games contain many role-playing elements (*Zelda II: The Adventure of Link* is the only one to include an experience system), they emphasize straightforward hack and slash-style combat over the strategic, turn-based or active time combat of games like *Final Fantasy*. The game's role-playing elements, however, have led to much debate over whether or not the *Zelda* games should be classified as action role-playing games, a genre on which the series has had a strong influence.[1]

Every game in the main *Zelda* series has consisted of three principal areas: an overworld in which movement is multidirectional, allowing the player some degree of freedom of action; areas of interaction with other characters (merely caves or hidden rooms in the first game, but expanding to entire towns and cities in subsequent games) in which the player gains special items or advice; and dungeons, areas of labyrinthine layout, usually underground, comprising a wide range of difficult enemies, bosses, and items. Each dungeon usually has one major item inside, which is usually essential for solving many of the puzzles within that dungeon and often plays a crucial role in defeating that dungeon's boss, as well as progressing through the game. In nearly every *Zelda* game, navigating a dungeon is aided by locating a map, which reveals its layout, and a magic compass, which reveals the location of significant and smaller items such as keys and equipment. In later games, the series includes a special "big key" that will unlock the door to battle th dungeon's boss enemy and open the item chest.

In most *Zelda* games, the player's life meter is represented as a line of hearts. The life meter is replenished a number of different ways, including picking up hearts left by defeated enemies or destroyed objects, fairies or springs located in specific locations, or consuming items such as potions or food. Fairies can be kept in bottles and act as extra lives, reviving the player if they run out of hearts. Players are able to extend their life meter by finding heart-shaped crystals called "Heart Containers". Full heart containers are usually received at the end of dungeons and dropped by the dungeon boss. Smaller "Pieces of Heart" are awarded for completing certain side quests or found hidden around the game world in various places, and require a certain number (usually four) to form a full heart container

The games pioneered a number of features that were to become industry standards. The original *Legend of Zelda* was the first console game with a save function that enabled players to stop playing and then resume later. *The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time* introduced a targeting system that simplified 3D combat.

Audio

Games in *The Legend of Zelda* series frequently feature in-game musical instruments, particularly in musical puzzles, which are widespread.[2] Often, instruments trigger game events: for example, the recorder in *The Legend of Zelda* can reveal secret areas, as well as warp Link to the Dungeon entrances. This warping with music feature has also been used in *A Link to the Past* and *Link's Awakening*. In *Ocarina of Time*, playing instruments is a core part of the game, with the player needing to play the instrument through the use of the game controller to succeed.[3] *Ocarina of Time* is "[one of the] first contemporary non-dance title[s] to feature music-making as part of its gameplay",[4] using music as a heuristic device and requiring the player to utilise songs to progress in the game[5] – a game mechanic that is also present in *Majora's Mask*.[6]

"The Legend of Zelda Theme" is a recurring piece of music that was created for the first game of the franchise. The composer and sound director of the series, Koji Kondo, initially planned to use Maurice Ravel's *Boléro* as the game's title theme, but was forced to change it when he learned, late in the game's development cycle, that the copyright for the orchestral piece had not yet expired. As a result, Kondo wrote a new arrangement of the overworld theme within one day.[7] The "Zelda Theme" has topped ScrewAttack's "Top Ten Videogame Themes Ever" list.[8]

Koji Kondo, the series' original composer and current sound director, in 2007

Up until *Breath of the Wild*, the *Legend of Zelda* series avoided using voice acting in speaking roles, relying instead on written dialogue. Series producer Eiji Aonuma previously stated that as Link is entirely mute, having the other characters speak while Link remains silent "would be off-putting".[9] Instead of theme music for different locations, *Breath of the Wild* plays natural ambience around the player as main sounds, in addition to some minimalist piano music.[10]

Inspiration

The Legend of Zelda was principally inspired by Shigeru Miyamoto's "explorations" as a young boy in the hillsides, forests, and caves surrounding his childhood home in Sonobe, Japan where he ventured into forests with secluded lakes, caves, and rural villages. According to Miyamoto, one of his most memorable experiences was the discovery of a cave entrance in the middle of the woods. After some hesitation, he apprehensively entered the cave, and explored its depths with the aid of a lantern. Miyamoto has referred to the creation of the *Zelda* games as an attempt to bring to life a "miniature garden" for players to play with in each game of the series.[11]

Hearing of American novelist F. Scott Fitzgerald's wife Zelda, Miyamoto thought the name sounded "pleasant and significant".[12] Paying tribute, he chose to name the princess after her and titled it *The Legend of Zelda*.

Link and the fairy were inspired by Peter Pan and Tinker Bell.[13][14]

The Master Sword was inspired by the Arthurian legend, first mentioned in Welsh mythology; Mabinogion as; 'Caledfwlch' Excalibur.[15][16] The similarities lay with the swords being kept in stone until the chosen one 'hero' takes it out to save the land.

Setting

The Legend of Zelda on the NES.

The Legend of Zelda takes place predominantly in a medieval Western Europe-inspired fantasy land called Hyrule, which has developed a deep history and wide geography over the series' many releases. Much of the backstory of the creation of Hyrule was revealed in the games *A Link to the Past*, *Ocarina of Time*, *The Wind Waker*, *Twilight Princess*, *Skyward Sword*, and *A Link Between Worlds*. Hyrule's principal inhabitants are pointy-eared humanoids called Hylians, which include the player character, Link, and the eponymous princess, Zelda.

According to the in-game backstories, the world of Hyrule was created by the three golden goddesses: Din, Farore, and Nayru.[17] Before departing, the goddesses left a sacred artifact called the Triforce, which could grant powers to the user. It physically manifests itself as three golden triangles in which each embodies one of the goddesses' virtues: Power, Courage, and Wisdom.[18] However, because the Triforce has no will of its own and it could not judge between good and evil, it would grant any wish indiscriminately.[19][20] Because of this, it was placed within an alternate world called the "Sacred Realm" or the "Golden Land" until one worthy of its power and has balanced virtues of Power, Wisdom, and Courage in their heart could obtain it, in its entirety. If a person is not of a balanced heart, the triforce part that the user mostly believes in will stay with that person and the remainder will seek out others. In order to master and control the triforce as a whole, the user must get the other parts found in other individuals and bring them together to reunite them. The Sacred Realm can itself be affected by the heart of those who enters it: those who are pure will make it a paradise, while those who are evil will transform it into a dark realm.[21]

In *Skyward Sword*, the Triforce was sought by a demon king named Demise,[22] and after a long battle, Demise was sealed away within the Temple of the goddess Hylia, guardian of the Triforce.[18][23] Hylia, placing the Hylians on a floating island (called Skyloft) in the sky to protect them, orchestrated a means to stop the demon from escaping: creating the Goddess Sword (later becoming the Master Sword) for her chosen hero[24] and discarding her divinity to be reborn among the people of Skyloft.[25] In time, Zelda and Link (the reborn Hylia and her predestined warrior) enacted the goddess' plan and Demise was destroyed. However, Demise vowed that his rage would be reborn and forever plague those descended from Link and Zelda.[26] That prophecy came to fruition in *Ocarina of Time*, when Ganondorf's attempt to get the Triforce scattered it with him gaining the Triforce of Power. The Triforce of Wisdom ended up with the Hylian princesses descended from Zelda, each named after her, while the Triforce of Courage is passed to a youth named Link across generations. While the Triforces of Power and Wisdom have been part of the series since the original *The Legend of Zelda*, it was only in *Zelda II: The Adventure of Link* that the Triforce of Courage was first introduced, being obtained by Link at the end of his quest. The Triforce, or even a piece of it, is not always distributed as a whole. Such as in *The Wind Waker*, Link must find all the pieces (called Triforce Shards) of the Triforce of Courage before he can return to Hyrule. Even in the original *The Legend of Zelda*, Zelda breaks her Triforce of Wisdom into 8 pieces for Link to find, before she was captured by Ganon.

The fictional universe established by the *Zelda* games sets the stage for each adventure. Some games take place in different lands with their own back-stories. Termina and Lorule serve as parallel worlds to Hyrule,[27] Hytopia is a connected kingdom,[28] and Koholint is an island far away from Hyrule that appears to be part of a dream.[29]

Fictional chronology

The chronology of the *Legend of Zelda* series was a subject of much debate among fans until an official timeline was released within the *Hyrule Historia* collector's book, which was first released in Japan in December 2011.[31][32] Prior to its release, producers confirmed the existence of a confidential document, which connected all the games.[33][34] Certain materials and developer statements once partially established an official timeline of the released installments. *Zelda II: The Adventure of Link* is a direct sequel to the original *The Legend of Zelda*, and takes place several years later.[35][36] The third game, *A Link to the Past*, is a prequel to the first two games,[37][38][39] and is directly followed by *Link's Awakening*.[40][41] *Ocarina of Time* is a prequel that takes the story many

The Legend of Zelda series chronology		
Skyward Sword		
The Minish Cap		
Four Swords		
Ocarina of Time		
The Decline of Hyrule	**The Twilight**	**A New World**

centuries back; according to character designer Satoru Takizawa, it was meant to implicitly tell the story of the Imprisoning War from the manual of *A Link to the Past*, with *Majora's Mask* directly following its ending.[42][43] *Skyward Sword* is then a prequel to *Ocarina of Time*.[44] *Twilight Princess* is set more than 100 years after *Ocarina of Time*.[45][46]

The Wind Waker is parallel, and takes place in the other timeline branch, more than a century after the adult era of *Ocarina of Time*.[45][46] *Phantom Hourglass* is a continuation of the story from *The Wind Waker*,[47] and is followed by *Spirit Tracks*, which is set about 100 years later on a supercontinent far away from the setting of *The Wind Waker*.[48] At the time of its release, *Four Swords* for the Game Boy Advance was considered the oldest tale in the series' chronology, with *Four Swords Adventures* set sometime after its events.[49] *The Minish Cap* precedes the two games, telling of the origins of villain Vaati and the creation of the Four Sword.[50] *A Link Between Worlds* takes place six generations after *Link to the Past*. Important events that occur in the game include the Triforce being reunited, and Ganon being resurrected.[51]

Nintendo's 2011 timeline announcement subsequently posits that following *Ocarina of Time*, the timeline splits into three alternate routes: in one, Link fails to defeat Ganon, leading into the Imprisoning War and *A Link to the Past*, *Oracle of Seasons* and *Oracle of Ages*, *Link's Awakening*, *The Legend of Zelda* and *The Adventure of Link*. In the second and third, Link is successful, leading to a timeline split between his childhood (when Zelda sends him back in time so he can use the wisdom he has gained to warn the Zelda in the past of the horrifying fate of Hyrule) and adulthood (where the Zelda from the future lives on to try and rebuild the kingdom). His childhood continues with *Majora's Mask*, followed by *Twilight Princess* and *Four Swords Adventures*. The timeline from his adult life continues into *Wind Waker*, *Phantom Hourglass* and *Spirit Tracks*.

In the early 2000s, Nintendo of America released a timeline on the official website of the series, which interpreted all stories up to the *Oracle* games as the adventures of a single protagonist named Link.[52] At one point, translator Dan Owsen and his coworkers at Nintendo of America had conceived another complete timeline and intended to make it available online. However the Japanese series developers rejected the idea so the timeline would be kept open to the imagination of the players.[53]

In 2018, Nintendo revealed that *Breath of the Wild* officially takes place after all previous games in the series (without specifying a connection to any of the three timelines), and moved *Link's Awakening* to take place before *Oracle of Seasons* and *Oracle of Ages*.[30]

Realm		
A Link to the Past	*Majora's Mask*	*The Wind Waker*
Link's Awakening[30]	*Twilight Princess*	*Phantom Hourglass*
Oracle of Seasons & Ages	*Four Swords Adventures*	*Spirit Tracks*
A Link Between Worlds		
Tri Force Heroes		
The Legend of Zelda		
The Adventure of Link		
Final timeline[30]		
Breath of the Wild		

Characters

Link

The central protagonist of *The Legend of Zelda* series, Link is the name of various young men who characteristically wear a green tunic and a pointed cap, and are the bearers of the Triforce of Courage. In most games, the player can give Link a different name before the start of the adventure, and he will be referred by that given name throughout by the non-player characters (NPCs). The various Links each have a special title, such as "Hero of Time", "Hero of the Winds" or "Hero chosen by the gods". Like many silent protagonists in video games, Link does not speak, only producing grunts, yells, or similar sounds. Despite the player not seeing the dialogue, it is referenced second-hand by in-game characters, showing that he is not, in fact, mute. Link is shown as a silent protagonist so that the audience is able to have their own thoughts as to how their Link would answer the characters instead of him having scripted responses.

Princess Zelda

Princess Zelda is the princess of Hyrule and the guardian of the Triforce of Wisdom. Her name is present in many of her female ancestors and descendants. While most games require Link to save Zelda from Ganon, she sometimes plays a supporting role in battle, using magical powers and weapons such as Light Arrows to aid Link. With the exception of the CD-i games (which were not official Nintendo games), she was not playable in the main series until *Spirit Tracks*, where she becomes a spirit and can possess a Phantom Knight that can be controlled by the player. Zelda appears under various other aliases and alter egos, including Sheik (in *Ocarina of Time*) and Tetra (in *The Wind Waker* and *Phantom Hourglass)*. In *Skyward Sword*, it is revealed that the Zelda of that game is a reincarnation of the goddess Hylia, whose power flows through the royal bloodline. The name "Zelda" derives from the American novelist Zelda Fitzgerald[54]

Ganon

Ganon, also known as Ganondorf in his humanoid form, is the main antagonist and the final boss in the majority of *The Legend of Zelda* games. In the series, Ganondorf is the leader of a race of desert brigands called the Gerudo, which consists entirely of female warriors save for one man born every one hundred years. He is significantly taller than other human NPCs, but his looks vary between games, often taking the form of a monstrous anthropomorphic boar. His specific motives vary from game to game, but most often his plans include him kidnapping Princess Zelda and planning to achieve domination of Hyrule and presumably the world beyond it. To this end, he seeks the Triforce, a powerful magical relic. He often possesses a portion of the Triforce called the Triforce of Power, which gives him great strength. However, it is often not enough to accomplish his ends, leading him to hunt the remaining Triforce pieces. Unlike Link, Zelda, and most other recurring characters, he is actually the same person in every game, with the exception of *Four Swords Adventures*, where he is a reincarnation of the original. In each game the battles with him are different and he fights using different styles. The game *Skyward Sword* indicates that Ganon is a reincarnation of an evil deity known as Demise.

History

1980s

The Legend of Zelda, the first game of the series, was first released in Japan on February 21, 1986, on the Famicom Disk System[55] A cartridge version, using battery-backed memory, was released in the United States on August 22, 1987, and Europe on November 27, 1987. The game features a "Second Quest," accessible either upon completing the game, or by registering one's name as "ZELDA" when starting a new quest. The Second Quest features different dungeons and item placement, and more difficult enemies.[56]

The second game, *Zelda II: The Adventure of Link*, was released for the Famicom Disk System in Japan on January 14, 1987,[55] and for the Nintendo Entertainment System in Europe in November 1988 and North America in December 1988. The game exchanged the top-down perspective for side-scrolling (though the top-down point of view was retained for overworld areas), and introduced RPG elements (such as experience points) not used previously or thereafter in the series. *The Legend of Zelda* and *Zelda II* were released in gold-coloured cartridges instead of the console's regular grey cartridges. Both were re-released in the final years of the Nintendo Entertainment System with grey cartridges.

1990s

Four years later, *The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past* returned to the top-down view (under a 3/4 perspective), and added the concept of an alternate dimension, the Dark World. The game was released for the Super NES on November 21, 1991[55] It was later re-released for the Game Boy Advance on March 14, 2003, in North America, on a cartridge with *Four Swords*,[55] the first multiplayer *Zelda*, and then through Nintendo's Virtual Console service on January 22, 2007. In addition, both this game (unchanged, except for being converted into a downloadable format)[57] and an exclusive "loosely based" sequel (which used the same game engine) called *BS Zelda no Densetsu Inishie no Sekiban*[58] were released on the Satellaview in Japan on March 2, 1997, and March 30, 1997, respectively.

The first *Legend of Zelda* game appeared on the Famicom Disk System in 1986. It was later converted into a cartridge game for the American NES.

In 1994, near the end of the Famicom's lifespan, the original Famicom game was re-released in cartridge format.[59] A modified version, *BS Zelda no Densetsu*, was released for the Super Famicom's satellite-based expansion, Satellaview, on August 6, 1995, in Japan. A second Satellaview game, *BS Zelda no Densetsu MAP2* was released for the Satellaview on December 30, 1995. Both games featured rearranged dungeons, an altered overworld, and new voice-acted plot-lines.[60]

The next game, *Link's Awakening*, is the first *Zelda* for Nintendo's Game Boy handheld, and the first set outside Hyrule and to exclude Princess Zelda. It was released in 1993, and re-released, in full color, as a launch game for the Game Boy Color in 1998 as *Link's Awakening DX*. This re-release features additions such as an extra color-based dungeon and a photo shop that allows interaction with the Game Boy Printer.

Ocarina of Time, the first 3D-styled game of the franchise

Timeline of release years	
1986	*The Legend of Zelda*
1987	*The Adventure of Link*
1988	
1989	
1990	
1991	*A Link to the Past*
1992	
1993	*Link's Awakening*
1994	
1995	
1996	
1997	
1998	*Ocarina of Time* / *Link's Awakening DX*
1999	
2000	*Majora's Mask*
2001	*Oracle of Seasons* and *Oracle of Ages*
2002	*Four Swords* / *The Wind Waker*
2003	*The Legend of Zelda: Collector's Edition*
2004	*Four Swords Adventures* / *The Minish Cap*
2005	
2006	*Twilight Princess*
2007	*Phantom Hourglass*
2008	
2009	*Spirit Tracks*
2010	
2011	*Ocarina of Time 3D* / *Skyward Sword*
2012	
2013	*The Wind Waker HD* / *A Link Between Worlds*
2014	
2015	*Majora's Mask 3D* / *Tri Force Heroes*
2016	*Twilight Princess HD*
2017	*Breath of the Wild*

After a five-year hiatus, the series made the transition to 3D with *Ocarina of Time* for the Nintendo 64, which was released in November 1998. This game, initially known as *Zelda 64*, retains the core gameplay of the previous 2D games, and was very successful commercially and critically. It is considered by many critics and gamers to be the best video game of all time, and ranks highly on IGN and EGM's "greatest games of all time" lists, as well as scoring perfect scores in several video game publications.[61] In February 2006, it was ranked by *Nintendo Power* as the best game released for a Nintendo console.[62] The game was originally developed for the poorly selling, Japanese-only Nintendo 64DD, but was ported to cartridge format when the 64DD hardware was delayed.[63] A new gameplay mechanic, lock-on targeting (called "Z-targeting" as that is the controller button used), is used in the game, which focuses the camera on a nearby target and alters the player's actions relative to that target.[64] Such mechanics allow precise sword fighting in a 3D space. The game heavily uses context-sensitive button play, which enabled the player to control various actions with Link using only one button on the Nintendo 64's game pad. Each action was handled slightly differently but all used the 'A' button to perform. For instance, standing next to a block and pressing 'A' made Link grab it (enabling him to push/pull it), but moving forwards into a

block and pressing 'A' allowed Link to climb the block. The 'B' button was used only as an attack button. The game featured the first appearance of Link's horse, Epona, allowing Link to travel quickly across land and fire arrows from horseback. Those who preordered the game received a gold-coloured cartridge in a limited edition box with a golden plastic card affixed, reading "Collector's Edition".[65] In some stores that had this "Collector's Edition" quickly sell out, a small and rare Zelda pin was given instead. It is the sword and shield emblem with "Zelda" written on it. Very few of them are known to remain.

Ocarina of Time was re-released on the GameCube in 2002, when it was offered as a pre-order incentive for *The Wind Waker* in the U.S., Canada and Japan.[66] Europe continued to receive it free in every copy of *The Wind Waker*, except for the discounted Player's Choice version. It includes what is widely believed to be the remnants of a cancelled 64DD expansion for Ocarina of Time known as *Ura Zelda* in early development. Named *Ocarina of Time Master Quest*, the game was given the addition of revamped, more difficult dungeon layouts.[66] *Ocarina of Time* was included as part of the *Collector's Edition* for the GameCube in 2003.[67] It is now available through the Wii's Virtual Console service.[68] In 2011, Nintendo released a new version of the game in stereoscopic 3D for the Nintendo 3DS, *The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time 3D*. In July 2015, Nintendo rereleased it for the Wii U Virtual Console.[69]

2000s

Ocarina of Time's follow-up, *Majora's Mask*, was released in April 2000. It uses the same 3D game engine as the previous game,[70] and added a time-based concept, in which Link, the protagonist, relives the events of three days as many times as needed to complete the game's objectives. It was originally called *Zelda Gaiden*,[71] a Japanese title that translates as *Zelda Side story*. Gameplay changed significantly; in addition to the time-limit, Link can use masks to transform into creatures with unique abilities. While *Majora's Mask* retains the graphical style of *Ocarina of Time*, it is also a departure, particularly in its atmosphere. It features motion-blur, unlike its predecessor. The game is darker,[70] dealing with death and tragedy in a manner not previously seen in the series, and has a sense of impending doom, as a large moon slowly descends upon the land of Termina to destroy all life. All copies of *Majora's Mask* are gold cartridges. A limited "Collector's Edition" lenticular cartridge label was offered as the pre-order incentive. Copies of the game that are not collector's editions feature a normal sticker cartridge label. *Majora's Mask* is included in the *Collector's Edition*,[67] and is available on the Virtual Console, as well as a 3D port for the portable 3DS console.

The next two games, *Oracle of Seasons* and *Oracle of Ages*, were released simultaneously for the Game Boy Color, and interact using passwords[72] or a Game Link Cable.[73] After one game has been completed, the player is given a password that allows the other game to be played as a sequel.[72] They were developed by Flagship in conjunction with Nintendo, with supervision from Miyamoto. After the team experimented with porting the original *The Legend of Zelda* to the Game Boy Color, they decided to make an original trilogy[74] to be called the "Triforce Series".[75] When the password system linking the three games proved too troublesome, the concept was reduced to two games at Miyamoto's suggestion.[76] These two games became *Oracle of Ages*, which is more puzzle-based, and *Oracle of Seasons*, which is more action-oriented.[77]

When Nintendo revealed the GameCube on August 24, 2000, the day before Nintendo's SpaceWorld 2000 exposition,[78] a software demonstration showed a realistically styled real-time duel between Ganondorf and Link. Fans and the media speculated that the battle might be from a *Zelda* game in development.[79] At Spaceworld 2001, Nintendo showed a cel-shaded *Zelda* game, later released as *The Wind Waker* in December 2002. Due to poor reception, nothing further was shown until a playable demonstration was ready. Miyamoto felt *The Wind Waker* would "extend *Zelda*'s reach to all ages".[80][81] The gameplay centres on controlling wind with a baton called the "Wind Waker" and sailing a small boat around an island-filled ocean, retaining similar gameplay mechanics as the previous 3D games in the series.

Following the release of *The Wind Waker* came *The Legend of Zelda: Collector's Edition*, which included the original *The Legend of Zelda*, *Zelda II*, *Ocarina of Time*, *Majora's Mask*, and a demo of *The Wind Waker*. GameSpot noted that *Majora's Mask* suffered from a frame rate which appeared choppier and inconsistencies in the audio.[82] This compilation was never sold commercially, and originally could only be obtained by purchasing a GameCube bundled with the disc[83][84] (in North America, Europe and Australia), by registering a GameCube and two games at Nintendo.com,[83] or by subscribing or renewing a subscription to *Nintendo Power* (in North America) or Club Nintendo in Sweden.[83] In the UK, 1000 copies were made available through the Club Nintendo Stars Catalogue program.[84] After these were quickly claimed, Nintendo gave a copy to customers who mailed in proof of purchases from select GameCube games.[84]

The next game released in the series was *Four Swords Adventures* for the GameCube, which was released in early 2004 in Japan and America, and January 2005 in Europe. Based on the handheld *Four Swords*, *Four Swords Adventures* was another deviation from previous *Zelda* gameplay, focusing on level-based and multiplayer gameplay. The game contains 24 levels and a map screen; there is no connecting overworld. For multiplayer features, each player must use a Game Boy Advance system linked to the GameCube via a Nintendo GameCube – Game Boy Advance link cable. The game features a single-player campaign, in which using a Game Boy Advance is optional.

Four Swords Adventures includes two gameplay modes: "Hyrulean Adventure", with a plot and gameplay similar to other *Zelda* games, and "Shadow Battle", in which multiple Links, played by multiple players, battle each other. The Japanese and Korean versions include an exclusive third segment, "Navi Trackers" (originally designed as the stand-alone game "Tetra's Trackers"), which contains spoken dialogue for most of the characters, unlike other games in *The Legend of Zelda* series.

In November 2004 in Japan and Europe, and January 2005 in America, Nintendo released *The Minish Cap* for the Game Boy Advance. In *The Minish Cap* Link can shrink in size using a mystical, sentient hat named Ezlo. While shrunk, he can see previously explored parts of a dungeon from a different perspective, and enter areas through otherwise-impassable openings.

In November 2006, *Twilight Princess* was released as the first *Zelda* game on the Wii, and later, in December 2006, as the last official Nintendo game for the GameCube, the console for which it was originally developed. The Wii version features a reversed world where everything that is in the west on the GameCube is in the east on the Wii, and vice versa. The display is mirrored in order to make Link right-handed, to make use of the Wii remote feel more natural. The game chronicles the struggle of an older Link to clear the troubles of the interacting "Twilight Realm", a mysterious force that appears around Hyrule. When he enters this realm, he is transformed into a wolf, and loses the ability to use his sword, shield or other items, but gains other abilities such as sharpened senses from his new form. *Twilight Princess* includes an incarnation of Link's horse, Epona, for fast transportation, and features mounted battle scenarios including boss battles that were not seen in previous games. Twilight Princess diverted from the cel shading of Wind Waker and went for graphics featuring more detailed textures, giving the game a darker atmosphere, thus making it feel more adult than previous games.
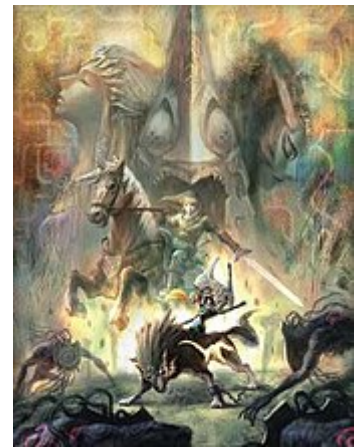
Promotional artwork for
Twilight Princess

At the 2006 Game Developers Conference, a trailer for *Phantom Hourglass* for the Nintendo DS was shown. It revealed traditional top-down *Zelda* gameplay optimised for the DS' features, with a cel-shaded 3d graphical style similar to *The Wind Waker*. At E3 2006, Nintendo confirmed the game's status as a direct sequel to *The Wind Waker*,[85] and released an extensive playable demo, including a multiplayer mode with "capture the flag" elements. *Phantom Hourglass* was released on June 23, 2007, in Japan, October 1, 2007, in North America and October 19, 2007, in Europe.

The next *Legend of Zelda* for the DS, *The Legend of Zelda: Spirit Tracks*, was released December 7, 2009, in North America and December 11, 2009, in the UK. In this game, the 'spirit tracks', railroads which chain an ancient evil, are disappearing from Hyrule. Zelda and Link go to the 'Spirit Tower' (the ethereal point of convergence for the tracks) to find out why. But villains steal Zelda's body for the resurrection of the Demon King. Rendered disembodied, Zelda is left a spirit, and only Link (and a certain few sages) can see her. Together they go on a quest to restore the spirit tracks, defeat the Demon King, and return Zelda to her body. Using a modified engine of that used in *Phantom Hourglass*, the notably new feature in this game is that the Phantom Guardians seen in *Phantom Hourglass* are, through a series of events, periodically controllable. It was the first time in the series that both Link & Zelda work together on the quest.

2010s

In April 2008, Miyamoto stated that "the *Zelda* team is forming again to work on new games".[86] Miyamoto clarified in July that the *Zelda* team had been working on a new *Zelda* game for the Wii.[87] In January 2010, Nintendo Executive Satoru Iwata stated that the game would be coming out at some time in 2010, and confirmed that the game would make use of the Wii's MotionPlus feature,

which had been announced too late to be integrated into the *Twilight Princess* Wii release. The game's subtitle was announced at E3 in 2010 as *Skyward Sword*, but its release was delayed to 2011.[88] The game, the earliest in the *Legend of Zelda* timeline, reveals the origins of Hyrule, Ganon and many elements featured in previous games. It was released on November 20, 2011; the first run included a 25th Anniversary CD of fully orchestrated music from various Zelda games, including *Skyward Sword*.

In addition, Nintendo celebrated the 25th anniversary of *The Legend of Zelda* game by releasing a *Zelda* game for all its current consoles in 2011: *Link's Awakening* in the 3DS's Virtual Console on June 7, *Ocarina of Time 3D* for the 3DS in mid-June, *Four Swords Anniversary Edition*[89] from September 28, 2011, to February 20, 2012, as a free DSiWare download and *Skyward Sword* for the Wii, which was released on November 18, 2011, in Europe; on November 20, 2011, in the United States; and on November 24, 2011, in Australia. A limited edition *Zelda* 25th anniversary 3DS was released on December 1, 2011, in Australia.[90]

The Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker HD, a remaster of the original GameCube game, was released by Nintendo on September 20, 2013, digitally on the Nintendo eShop in North America with a retail release on September 26 in Japan, October 4 in North America and Europe, and October 5 in Australia. A month later, Nintendo released *The Legend of Zelda: A Link Between Worlds* for the Nintendo 3DS, which takes place in the same setting as *A Link to the Past*.[91][92]

Nintendo released a second 3DS version, *The Legend of Zelda: Majora's Mask 3D*, in North America and Europe on February 13, 2015, and in Japan and Australia on February 14, 2015.

At E3 2015, Nintendo announced *The Legend of Zelda: Tri Force Heroes*, a cooperative multiplayer game released for the 3DS in October 2015.[93] *The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess HD*, a high-definition remastering of *Twilight Princess*, was released for the Wii U in March 2016.[94]

Nintendo showcased a demo reel at E3 2011, which depicted Link fighting a monster in HD.[95] In January 2013, Nintendo revealed that a new *Legend of Zelda* game was being planned for the Wii U.[96] The game was officially teased at E3 2014, and was scheduled to be released in 2015. However, in March 2015, the game was delayed to 2016.[97] In April 2016, the game was delayed again to 2017; it was also announced that it would be simultaneously released on the Wii U and Nintendo Switch.[98] At E3 2016, the game was showcased under the title *The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild*.[99] The game was released on March 3, 2017.[100]

Other games

CD-i games

A series of video games was developed and released for the Philips CD-i in the early 1990s as a product of a compromise between Philips and Nintendo, after the companies failed to develop a CD-ROM peripheral for the Super NES. Created independently with no observation by or influence from Nintendo, the games are *Link: The Faces of Evil* and *Zelda: The Wand of Gamelon*, together with *Zelda's Adventure*. Nintendo never acknowledged them in the *Zelda* timeline, and they are considered to be in a separate, self-contained canon. These games are widely acknowledged to be the worst installments in the series.[101]

The *Zelda* games for the Philips CD-i are infamous for their poor quality and are not canon.

LCD games

Three *Zelda*-themed LCD games were created between 1989 and 1992. The *Zelda* version of Nintendo's Game & Watch series was released first in August 1989 as a dual-screen handheld electronic game similar in appearance to today's Nintendo DS. It was re-released in 1998 as a Toymax, Inc. Mini Classic and was later included as an unlockable extra in *Game & Watch Gallery 4*, a 2002 compilation for the Game Boy Advance. While the Game & Watch *Zelda* was developed in-house by Nintendo, the subsequent two LCD games were developed by third parties under license by Nintendo. In October 1989, *The Legend of Zelda* was developed by Nelsonic as part of its Game Watch line. This game was an actual digital watch

with primitive gameplay based on the original *Legend of Zelda.* In 1992, Epoch Co. developed *Zelda no Densetsu: Kamigami no Triforce* for its Barcode Battler II console. The game employed card-scanning technology similar to the later-released Nintendo e-Reader.

Cancelled games

Throughout the lifespan of *The Legend of Zelda* series, a number of games (including main series games as well as re-releases and spin-offs) in varying states of completeness have had their releases cancelled. Perhaps the earliest of these was Gottlieb's *The Legend of Zelda Pinball Machine* (cancelled 1993). After securing a license from Nintendo to produce two Nintendo-franchise-based pinball machines, pinball designer Jon Norris was tasked with designing the table. Before it was completed, Gottlieb decided to repurpose the game with an *American Gladiators* theme. Licensing for this version ultimately fell through and the game was released as simply *Gladiators* (November 1993).[102]

In 1998, Nintendo cancelled *The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time Ura.* Originally intended as an expansion disk for *Ocarina of Time* on the Nintendo 64DD, poor sales figures for the N64DD system led Nintendo to cancel its plans for the release. In 2002, Nintendo released a bonus disc called *The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time Master Quest.* It contained emulated versions of *Ocarina of Time* and *Ocarina of Time Master Quest* with a number of modifications originally planned for release in *Ocarina of Time Ura* including GUI textures and text modified to reflect the GameCube.

In 2001, under license from Nintendo, Capcom cancelled the release of *The Legend of Zelda: Mystical Seed of Courage* for Game Boy Color. Working with a Capcom team, Yoshiki Okamoto was originally tasked with designing a series of three *Zelda* games for the Game Boy Color.[103] Referred to as the "Triforce Series",[104] the games were known as *The Legend of Zelda: The Mysterious Acorn: Chapter of Power*, *Chapter of Wisdom*, and *Chapter of Courage* in Japan[105] and *The Legend of Zelda: Mystical Seed of Power*, *Mystical Seed of Wisdom*, and *Mystical Seed of Courage* in the US.[106] The games were to interact using a password system,[104] but the limitations of this system and the difficulty of coordinating three games proved too complicated, so the team scaled back to two games at Miyamoto's suggestion.[107][108] *The Legend of Zelda: Oracle of Seasons* was adapted from *Mystical Seed of Power*, *The Legend of Zelda: Oracle of Ages* was adapted from *Mystical Seed of Wisdom*, and *Mystical Seed of Courage* was cancelled.[104]

Before its 2006 release, both Link and Samus from the *Metroid* series were planned to be playable characters for the Wii version of *Marvel: Ultimate Alliance.* However, they didn't make the final release because they weren't Marvel characters.[109]

In 2011, an unnamed Zelda 25th Anniversary Compilation was cancelled. To celebrate the 25th anniversary of the series, Nintendo of America originally had planned to release a compilation of games together for the Wii, similar to the collector's edition disc released for the GameCube in 2003. However Nintendo of Japan's president Satoru Iwata and Shigeru Miyamoto disagreed in releasing it, believing it would be too similar to the Super Mario 25th Anniversary game released in 2010.[110]

Spin-off games

As the franchise has grown in popularity, several games have been released that are set within or star a minor character from the universe of *The Legend of Zelda* but are not directly connected to the main *The Legend of Zelda* series. Both map versions of the game *BS Zelda no Densetsu* for the Satellaview (released in August and December 1995) could be considered spin-offs due to the fact that they star the "Hero of Light" (portrayed by either the Satellaview's male or female avatar) as opposed to Link as the protagonist of Hyrule. A third Satellaview game released in March 1997, *BS Zelda no Densetsu Inishie no Sekiban* (*BS The Legend of Zelda: Ancient Stone Tablets*) could also be considered a spin-off for the same reason. Other spin-off games include *Freshly-Picked Tingle's Rosy Rupeeland* for the Nintendo DS – an RPG released in September 2006 in Japan (Summer of 2007 in the UK) to star supporting character Tingle. A second Tingle game is *Tingle's Balloon Fight DS* for the Nintendo DS. Here Tingle again stars in this spin-off arcade style platformer, released in April 2007 only in Japan and available solely to Platinum Club Nintendo members. In addition to games in which Link does not star as the protagonist, games such as the shooter game, *Link's Crossbow Training* (for the Wii), have been considered spin-offs due to the lack of a traditional "Save Hyrule" plot-line. Released in November 2007 as a bundle with the Wii Zapper, this game allows players to assume the identity of Link as he progresses through a series of tests to perfect his

crossbow marksmanship. *Color Changing Tingle's Love Balloon Trip* was released in Japan in 2009 as a sequel to Freshly-Picked Tingle's Rosy Rupeeland. *Hyrule Warriors*, a crossover game combining the setting of Nintendo's *The Legend of Zelda* series and the gameplay of Tecmo Koei's *Dynasty Warriors* series, was announced for the Wii U video game system in December 2013 and was released in North America in September 2014. *Hyrule Warriors Legends*, a version for the Nintendo 3DS containing more content and gameplay modifications, was released in March 2016. To commemorate the launch of the My Nintendo loyalty program in March 2016, Nintendo released *My Nintendo Picross: The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess*, a Picross puzzle game developed by Jupiter for download to the Nintendo 3DS.[111][112]

Cross-overs

The Legend of Zelda series has crossed-over into a number of other Nintendo and third party video games. Most prominent of the collaborations would be in the *Super Smash Bros.* series of fighting games published by Nintendo. Link appears as a fighter in *Super Smash Bros.* for the Nintendo 64, the first entry in the series, and is part of the roster in all subsequent releases in the series as well. Zelda, (who is able to transform into Sheik as well), Ganondorf, and Young Link (the child version of Link from *Ocarina of Time*) were added to the player roster for *Super Smash Bros. Melee*, and appeared in all subsequent releases except for "Young Link", who is later replaced by "Toon Link" from *The Wind Waker*, in subsequent releases *Super Smash Bros. Brawl* and *Super Smash Bros. for Nintendo 3DS and Wii U* however, both Young Link and Toon Link appear in the fifth installment, *Super Smash Bros. Ultimate*. Other elements from the series, such as locations and items, are also included throughout the *Smash Bros.* series. Outside of the series, Nintendo allowed for the use of Link as a playable character exclusively in the GameCube release of Namco's fighting game *Soulcalibur II*.[113]

- Link, using a design based on *Skyward Sword*, appears as a playable character in *Mario Kart 8* via downloadable content, along with a "Hyrule Circuit" racetrack themed on *The Legend of Zelda* series.[114] The first pack is named after the series.
- In *Sonic Lost World*, a DLC stage based on *The Legend of Zelda* series was released in March 2014, named "The Legend of Zelda Zone". While built around the core gameplay mechanics of *Sonic Lost World*, "The Legend of Zelda Zone" incorporates some elements from the *Zelda* series, including a heart-based vitality meter, rupee collection, and a miniature dungeon to explore.[115]

Reception and legacy

The Legend of Zelda series has received outstanding levels of acclaim from critics and the public. *Ocarina of Time*, *The Wind Waker*, *Skyward Sword*, and *Breath of the Wild* have each received a perfect 40/40 score (10/10 by four reviewers) by Japanese *Famitsu* magazine,[174][175] making *Zelda* one of the few series with multiple perfect scores. *Ocarina of Time* was even listed by *Guinness World Records* as the highest-rated video game in history, citing its Metacritic score of 99 out of 100.[176] *Computer and Video Games* awarded *The Wind Waker* and *Twilight Princess* a score of 10/10.[177][178] *A Link to the Past* has won Gold Award from *Electronic Gaming Monthly*. In *Nintendo Power*'s Top 200 countdown in 2004, *Ocarina of Time* took first place, and seven other *Zelda* games placed in the top 40.[179] *Twilight Princess* was named Game of the Year by *X-Play*, *GameTrailers*, *1UP*, *Electronic Gaming Monthly*, *Spacey Awards*, *Game Informer*, *GameSpy*, *Nintendo Power*, *IGN*, and many other websites. The editors of review aggregator websites GameRankings, IGN and Metacritic have all given *Ocarina of Time* their highest aggregate scores.[180] *Game Informer* has awarded *The Wind Waker*, *Twilight Princess*, *Skyward Sword*, *A Link Between Worlds* and *Breath of the Wild* with scores of 10/10. *Phantom Hourglass* was named DS Game of the Year by IGN and *GameSpy*.[181][182] Airing December 10, 2011, Spike TV's annual Video Game Awards gave the series the first ever "Hall of Fame Award", which Miyamoto accepted in person.[183] *Ocarina of Time* and its use of melodic themes to identify different game regions has been called a reverse of Richard Wagner's use of leitmotifs to identify characters and themes.[184] *Ocarina of Time* was so well received that sales increased for real ocarinas.[185] IGN praised the music of *Majora's Mask* for its brilliance despite its heavy use of MIDI. It has been ranked the seventh-greatest game by *Electronic Gaming Monthly*, whereas *Ocarina of Time* was ranked eighth.[186][187] The series won *GameFAQs Best Series Ever* competition.[188]

As of April 2018, *The Legend of Zelda* franchise has sold over 80 million copies, with the original *The Legend of Zelda* being the fourth best-selling NES game of all time.[189][190] The series was ranked as the 64th top game (collectively) by *Next Generation* in 1996.[191] According to British film magazine *Empire*, with "the most vividly-realised world and the most varied game-play of any

game on any console, *Zelda* is a solid bet for the best game series ever"[192]

Impact

Multiple members of the game industry have expressed how Zelda games have impacted them. Rockstar Games founder and *Grand Theft Auto* director, Dan Houser, stated, "Anyone who makes 3-D games who says they've not borrowed something from *Mario* or *Zelda* [on the Nintendo 64] is lying."[193] Rockstar founder and *Grand Theft Auto* director Sam Houser also cited the influence of *Zelda*, describing *Grand Theft Auto III* as "Zelda meets Goodfellas".[194] *Ōkami* director Hideki Kamiya (Capcom, PlatinumGames) states that he has been influenced by *The Legend of Zelda* series in developing the game, citing *The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past* as his favorite game of all time.[195] *Soul Reaver* and *Uncharted* director, Amy Hennig (Crystal Dynamics, Naughty Dog), cited *Zelda* as inspiration for the *Legacy of Kain* series, noting *A Link to the Past*'s influence on *Blood Omen* and *Ocarina of Time*'s influence on *Soul Reaver*.[196] *Soul Reaver* and *Uncharted* creator, Richard Lemarchand (Crystal Dynamics, Naughty Dog), cited *A Link to the Past*'s approach to combining gameplay with storytelling as inspiration for *Soul Reaver*.[197] *Wing Commander* and *Star Citizen* director, Chris Roberts (Origin Systems, Cloud Imperium Games), cited *Zelda* as an influence on his action role-playing game, *Times of Lore*.[198]

Souls creator Hidetaka Miyazaki (FromSoftware) named *A Link To The Past* as one of his favorite role-playing video games[199] According to Miyazaki, "*The Legend of Zelda* became a sort of textbook for 3D action games."[200] *Ico* director Fumito Ueda (Team Ico) cited *Zelda* as an influence on *Shadow of the Colossus*.[201] *Fable* series director Peter Molyneux (Lionhead Studios, Microsoft Studios) stated that *Twilight Princess* is one of his favorite games. "I just feel it's jaw-dropping and its use of the hardware was brilliant. And I've played that game through several times," he said to TechRadar.[202] *Darksiders* director David L. Adams (Vigil Games) cited *Zelda* as an influence on his work.[203] *Prince of Persia* and *Assassin's Creed* director Raphael Lacoste (Ubisoft) cited *The Wind Waker* as an influence on *Assassin's Creed IV: Black Flag*.[204] CD Projekt Red (*The Witcher*, *Cyberpunk 2077*) cited the *Zelda* series as an influence on *The Witcher* series, including *The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt*.[205] *Final Fantasy* and *The 3rd Birthday* director Hajime Tabata (Square Enix) cited *Ocarina of Time* as inspiration for the seamless open world of *Final Fantasy XV*.[206]

Aggregate review scores
As of March 22, 2017.

Game	GameRankings	Metacritic
The Legend of Zelda	(NES) 84%[116] (GBA) 79%[117]	(GBA) 84[118]
The Adventure of Link	(NES) 78%[119] (GBA) 69%[120]	(GBA) 73[121]
A Link to the Past	(SNES) 93%[122] (GBA) 92%[123]	(GBA) 95[124]
Link's Awakening	(GB) 90%[125] (GBC) 91%[126]	–
Ocarina of Time	(N64) 98%[127] (GC) 90%[128] (3DS) 94%[129]	(N64) 99[130] (GC) 91[131] (3DS) 94[132]
Majora's Mask	(N64) 92%[133] (3DS) 90%[134]	(N64) 95[135] (3DS) 89[136]
Oracle of Seasons and Ages	(*Seasons*) 91%[137] (*Ages*) 92%[138]	–
Four Swords	(NDS) 85%[139]	(NDS) 85[140]
The Wind Waker	(GC) 94%[141] (Wii U) 91%[142]	(GC) 96[143] (Wii U) 90[144]
Four Swords Adventures	(GC) 85%[145]	(GC) 86[146]
The Minish Cap	(GBA) 90%[147]	(GBA) 89[148]
Twilight Princess	(GC) 95%[149] (Wii) 95%[150] (Wii U) 86%[151]	(GC) 96[152] (Wii) 95[153] (Wii U) 86[154]
Phantom Hourglass	(NDS) 89%[155]	(NDS) 90[156]
Spirit Tracks	(NDS) 87%[157]	(NDS) 87[158]
Skyward Sword	(Wii) 93%[159]	(Wii) 93[160]
A Link Between Worlds	(3DS) 91%[161]	(3DS) 91[162]
Tri Force Heroes	(3DS) 72%[163]	(3DS) 73[164]
Breath of the Wild	(NS) 97%[165] (Wii U) 97%[166]	(NS) 97[167] (Wii U) 96[168]

Other media

TV series

A 13-episode American animated TV series, adapted by DiC and distributed by Viacom Enterprises, aired in 1989. The animated *Zelda* shorts were broadcast each Friday, instead of the usual *Super Mario Bros.* cartoon which was aired during the rest of the week. The series loosely follows the two NES *Zelda* games (the original *The Legend of Zelda* and *The Adventure of Link*), mixing settings and characters from those games with original creations. The show's older incarnations of both Link and Zelda appear in various episodes of *Captain N: The Game Master* during its second season.

Print media

Valiant Comics released a short series of comics featuring characters and settings from the *Zelda* cartoon as part of their *Nintendo Comics System* line. Manga adaptations of many entries in the series, including *A Link to the Past*, *Ocarina of Time*, *Majora's Mask*, *Oracle of Seasons* and *Oracle of Ages*, *Four Swords Adventures*, *The Minish Cap*, and *Phantom Hourglass*, have been produced under license from Nintendo, mostly in Japan. These cartoons are usually not involved with the chronology of the actual games.

A number of official books, novels, and gamebooks have been released based on the series as well. The earliest was *Moblin's Magic Spear*, published in 1989 by Western Publishing under their Golden Books Family Entertainment division and written by Jack C. Harris. It took place sometime during the first game. Two gamebooks were published as part of the *Nintendo Adventure Books* series by Archway, both of which were written by Matt Wayne. The first was *The Crystal Trap* (which focuses more on Zelda) and the second was *The Shadow Prince*. Both were released in 1992. A novel based on *Ocarina of Time* was released in 1999, written by Jason R. Rich and published by Sybex Inc. under their *Pathways to Adventure* series. Another two gamebooks were released as part of the *You Decide on the Adventure* series published by Scholastic. The first book was based on *Oracle of Seasons* and was released in 2001. The second, based on *Oracle of Ages*, was released in 2002. Both were written by Craig Wessel. In 2006, Scholastic released a novel as part of their *Nintendo Heroes* series, *Link and the Portal of Doom*. It was written by Tracey West and was set shortly after the events of *Ocarina of Time*.

In 2011, to coincide with the 25th anniversary of the series, an art book was published exclusively in Japan under the name *Hyrule Historia* by Shogakukan. It contains concept art from the series's conception to the release of *Skyward Sword* in 2011 and multiple essays about the production of the games, as well as an overarching timeline of the series. It also includes a prequel manga to *Skyward Sword* by Zelda manga duo Akira Himekawa. The book received an international release by publisher Dark Horse Comics on January 29, 2013.[207] it took the number one spot on Amazon's sales chart, taking the spot away from E. L. James's *50 Shades of Grey* trilogy.[208] Dark Horse released *The Legend of Zelda: Art & Artifacts*, a follow-up art book to *Hyrule Historia* containing additional artwork and interviews,[209][210] in North America on February 21, 2017, and in Europe on February 23, 2017.[211]

Music

Life-to-date number units shipped, in millions

Game	Year	Sales
The Legend of Zelda	1986 (NES)	6.51[169]
The Adventure of Link	1987 (NES)	4.38[169]
A Link to the Past	1991 (SNES)	4.61[169]
Link's Awakening	1993 (GB)	3.83[169]
Ocarina of Time	1998 (N64)	7.6[169]
Majora's Mask	2000 (N64)	3.36[169]
Oracle of Seasons and *Oracle of Ages*	2001 (GBC)	3.96[169]
The Wind Waker	2002 (GC)	4.43[169]
The Minish Cap	2004 (GBA)	1.76[169]
Twilight Princess	2006 (GC/Wii)	8.85[n 1][171]
Phantom Hourglass	2007 (DS)	4.76[169]
Spirit Tracks	2009 (DS)	2.96[169]
Skyward Sword	2011 (Wii)	3.67[169]
A Link Between Worlds	2013 (3DS)	2.9[169]
Tri Force Heroes	2015 (3DS)	1.14[172]
Breath of the Wild	2017 (Wii U/NS)	11.36[n 2]

Taking place in Cologne, Germany, on September 23, 2010, the video game music concert *Symphonic Legends* focused on music from Nintendo and, among others, featured games such as *The Legend of Zelda*. Following an intermission, the second half of the concert was entirely dedicated to an expansive symphonic poem dedicated to the series. The 35-minute epic tells the story of Link's evolution from child to hero.[212][213]

To celebrate the 25th anniversary of the series in 2011, Nintendo commissioned an original symphony, *The Legend of Zelda: Symphony of the Goddesses*. The show was originally performed in the fall of 2011 in Los Angeles and consists of live performances of much of the music from the series.[214] It has since been scheduled for 18 shows so far throughout the United States and Canada.[214][215] Nintendo released a CD, *The Legend of Zelda 25th Anniversary Special Orchestra CD*. Featuring eight tracks from live performances of the symphony, the CD is included alongside the special edition of *The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword* for the Wii. Nintendo would later celebrate *The Legend of Zelda*'s 30th anniversary with an album which was released in Japan in February 2017.[216]

Cancelled films

In 2007, Imagi Animation Studios, who provided the animation for *TMNT* and *Astro Boy*, created a pitch reel for a computer-animated *The Legend of Zelda* movie. Nintendo did not take the studio up on their offer due to the failure of the live-action movie adaption of *Super Mario Bros.*[217]

In 2013, Aonuma stated that, if development of a film were to move forward, the company would want to use the opportunity to embrace audience interaction in some capacity.[218][219]

Board games

The Legend of Zelda-themed *Monopoly* board game was released in the United States on September 15, 2014.[220] A *Clue* board game in the style of *The Legend of Zelda* series was released in June 2017.[221] A *UNO*-styled *The Legend of Zelda* game was announced in February 2018 for release exclusively at GameStop in North America.[222]

Notes

a. In Japanese: ゼルダの伝説 (Zeruda no Densetsu)

Group n

1. *Twilight Princess* sales breakdown:
   - GameCube version: 1.59 million[170]
   - Wii version: 7.26 million
2. *Breath of the Wild* sales breakdown:
   - Wii U version: 1.08 million[169]
   - Switch version: 10.28 million[173]

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External links

- Official website